

OLC 78-2991/2  
7 September 1978

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Request by Senator Lloyd Bentsen (D., Texas)  
for Unclassified Information on Philip Agee

Attached is a three and one-half page unclassified fact sheet delivered by the undersigned to Brent Budowsky, of Senator Bentsen's staff, on 7 September 1978. This fact sheet may or may not be used by Senator Bentsen in an unclassified manner in support of his bill. The release of this fact sheet was coordinated with [redacted] of

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Attachment:  
As Stated

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Philip Agee has escalated his personal vendetta against the CIA to a declaration of open war. At the recent World Youth Festival in Havana, Agee reaffirmed to the world his intention of fighting the CIA by continuing to expose its personnel and operations. Towards this end he has announced the publication of a new book entitled, Dirty Work: The CIA in Western Europe." The book contains instructions on how to identify and expose CIA personnel and operations. The book is said to contain biographies of 700 CIA and NSA personnel abroad. Agee has also launched publication of "Covert Action Information Bulletin," which Agee, along with others, plans to publish bi-monthly with the hope the publication will become in its words, "a permanent weapon in the fight against the CIA, the FBI, military intelligence, and all other instruments of U.S. imperialist oppression throughout the world." Finally, Philip Agee states that he intends to organize a worldwide network of "agents" to expose CIA personnel and methods of operation. This will be called operation "CIA Watch."

Background:

As you may know, Philip Agee, now 43 years old, was employed by the CIA for 11 years before resigning in November 1968. At the time of his resignation in Mexico City, Agee gave no indication of disaffection. On the contrary, his resignation letter had only praise and good wishes for the Agency and his colleagues. Agee now claims that he had been dissatisfied with the Agency for several years prior to his resignation. In fact, he was asked to resign because of personal/marital problems which threatened to expose him publicly in Mexico City as a CIA officer.

Agee's disaffection with CIA first surfaced in 1971 when he wrote a letter to a leftist Uruguayan newspaper identifying himself as a former CIA officer and charging CIA with interference in the internal affairs of Uruguay, Chile, and Brazil. Agee had already begun work on the book that he researched during several trips to Cuba and eventually published <sup>in England</sup> in 1975 as Inside the Company: CIA Diary. His stated purpose was to raise an outcry against CIA in the U.S. press, arouse Congress to undertake an investigation, and launch an action program to neutralize the Agency from within and without.

#### Damage Assessment

Agee's first book exposed 170 Agency personnel and numerous agents and operations in Latin America known to him during his years of service there. These exposures resulted in the retirement of more than 100 active foreign agents. As of June 1977, the monetary cost of Agee's exposures were estimated to be more than \$2,000,000. The Agency continues to incur other costs-- both direct and indirect. It is impossible to assign a dollar figure to the damage done to the lives and careers of the staff personnel named by Agee. This damage had included mental anguish and actual physical danger to staff personnel and their families.

The damage to our cooperative relationships with friendly foreign intelligence services is difficult to estimate, but there have been many instances in which our liaison contacts are less cooperative and frank than in the past because they feel <sup>The U.S. is incapable of compelling its intelligence</sup> ~~we can no longer keep secrets~~. It is impossible to determine to what extent we are being denied information we would otherwise have received.

*officers to keep secrets.*

There are numerous cases of current and prospective clandestine agents refusing to cooperate with CIA because they feel it may be unable to protect their identities; they cite Agee's activities as an example.

Several officials of U.S. business corporations have explained their reluctance to cooperate by citing Agee's exposes as a specific example of the potential for other disaffected Agency employees engaging in similar activities in the future.

Since the publication of Agee's first book in 1975, Agee has contributed to press exposures of CIA personnel, made numerous public appearances, and has written anti-CIA articles for various publications in the U.S. and abroad. He has become a focal point for dispensing information about CIA to a large number of organizations whose goals, considered collectively, are to impede the gathering of foreign intelligence by the U.S., to thwart U.S. foreign policy, and to undermine U.S. influence throughout the world.

#### Conclusion:

The crux of the entire exposé problem is the physical safety of CIA personnel and their families. Agee has attempted to downplay his indirect contribution to the assassination of Athens Station Chief Richard Welch, but the fact that the uncovering of CIA personnel stations abroad serves to make them the potential targets of terrorist and other violence-prone groups cannot be minimized or ignored.

Agee not only condones the use of violence against our personnel, he actually invites it. His advice to those who read his exposes is to "organize public demonstrations against those named - both at the American Embassy

and at their homes - and where possible, bring pressure on the Government to throw them out." Agee then goes on to say that "Peaceful protest will do the job." But he advises that "when it doesn't, those whom the CIA has most oppressed will find other ways of fighting back."

Exposure of abuses by our intelligence services is one thing, but indiscriminately uncovering CIA personnel and inviting violence against them is unconscionable; it also poses a serious threat to the national security that must be dealt with promptly.